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Australian InCar Entertainment is published by nextmedia Pty Ltd
ACN: 128 805 970, Level 6, 207 Pacific Highway, St Leonards NSW
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DIGGING THE GOLD!

A grand occasion requires a grand response. So it is with great excitement that we launch this very special 'Gold' issue of InCar magazine.

We're bringing you this Gold issue in order to revel in the best car audio products as part of the Sound+Image InCar Awards for 2016, a most auspicious occasion and the highlight of the mobile electronics industry calendar. Truly love over Gold.

And we celebrate the craftsmanship and artistry of the best car installations that appeared in our issues throughout 2015. We chose these cars because they combined the most outstanding custom installations – in terms of bling, potential sound quality and overall presentation – with expertly-chosen audio-visual kit. These are world-class installs to make their creators and their owners extremely

proud. And just because we can, we also feature a small teaser with the wonders that are to come... on pages 58 and 59 you'll see a preview montage of some of the best cars in store for our regular 2016 publications. Wait 'til you see these beauties...

The Incas and Aztecs knew the value of gold. So did the Spanish. And here at InCar so do we.

Ed Kramer
Editor



INCAR #07 -2015

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INCAR ON THE WEB

For the latest news in mobile entertainment, selected cars and features, visit our AVHub website, and while you're at it, check out our sister audio and visual publications *Sound+Image*, *Australian Hi-Fi*, *Audio Esoterica*, and the photography clan *Pro Photo and Camera*.

CARS

FEATURES



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FULL ARSENAL

It's no mirage; this Mitsubishi has been totally re-built and features a stunning winged-door exterior and a breathtaking interior in white leather. And it's crowned with AV from JVC's popular Arsenal range.

18

SILVER TRAY

And silver spoon too. This is a massive Rockford Fosgate install, both in tray and cabin, with augmentation from a solid visual component list.

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HELL FOR LEATHER!

Tan mustard leather lines the entirety of this outstanding Mazda RX7's interior and it's a damn fine sight. And just check out the rest... a plethora of Option Audio goodies.

38

THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS

An outstandingly comprehensive customisation masterwork worthy of our Gold Edition. This Demonic HSV Ute is one hell-of-an audio demon.

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RED ROCKS

Resplendent in crimson throughout and sporting some of Focal's best kit, this is an extensively customised BMW that's sure to blow your SQ mind.



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In a very, very abbreviated sneak preview we bring you titbits of promising feature cars that will appear within our pages in 2016.



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We celebrate all things car audio as we select the very best products in mobile entertainment.

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EVOLVING ARSENAL

Evolution keeps changing things, generation by generation, until they reach near perfection. Has this Mitsubishi Mirage, in its phenomenal current state, reached its ultimate state of evolution?

Story **Ed Kramer** Images **Ben Hosking**





Yes indeed, this Mirage has been 'EVOLVN' for some time now, to a stage that it's become a real eye candy proposition. But not only is it pleasing to the eye; it's also extremely satisfactory to the ear too because on board is a whole swag of JVC's Arsenal range gear all installed by owner Steven Page himself and the experts at Eastside Kustoms.

BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS

Actually Steven first got this car back in 2005 when he was an apprentice and it has gone through a number of improvements and evolving versions before arriving at the stunner we see here. And along the way, through some early "dodgy paint jobs and trims" over the years, Steven has built relationships and friendships that he feels will be with him forever.

Steven may have referred to early paint jobs of lacklustre quality but that is a universe away from the stunning 'Blue & Ice Violet Pearl' finish on the car now - that is a truly superb colour choice. The exterior is also enhanced by the shaved look, the covered tail lights, the X-Racing custom body kit, the chrome side mirrors, 18-inch chrome wheels with thin rubber and more. Oh, and did we mention the wing doors? Master coup!

The car is motored by a DB Precision Engines fully converted powerhouse and is somewhat of a





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Just one in the Focal range of Performance Flax Cone Subwoofers the P20 F consists of a straightforward 4-Ohm voice coil, which is perfectly suited for small enclosures (closed or bass-reflex). Several innovations raise its performance to an even higher level. The dual magnet delivers improved linearity and ensures optimal magnetic power delivered to the voice coil, which features a new cooling system. Glass fibre is used for the mounting of the voice coil, making it more robust while protecting the cone from the heat emitted. Last but not least, the new fixings connecting the cone to the voice coil and the spider to the basket improve reliability for extreme use (very high excursion).

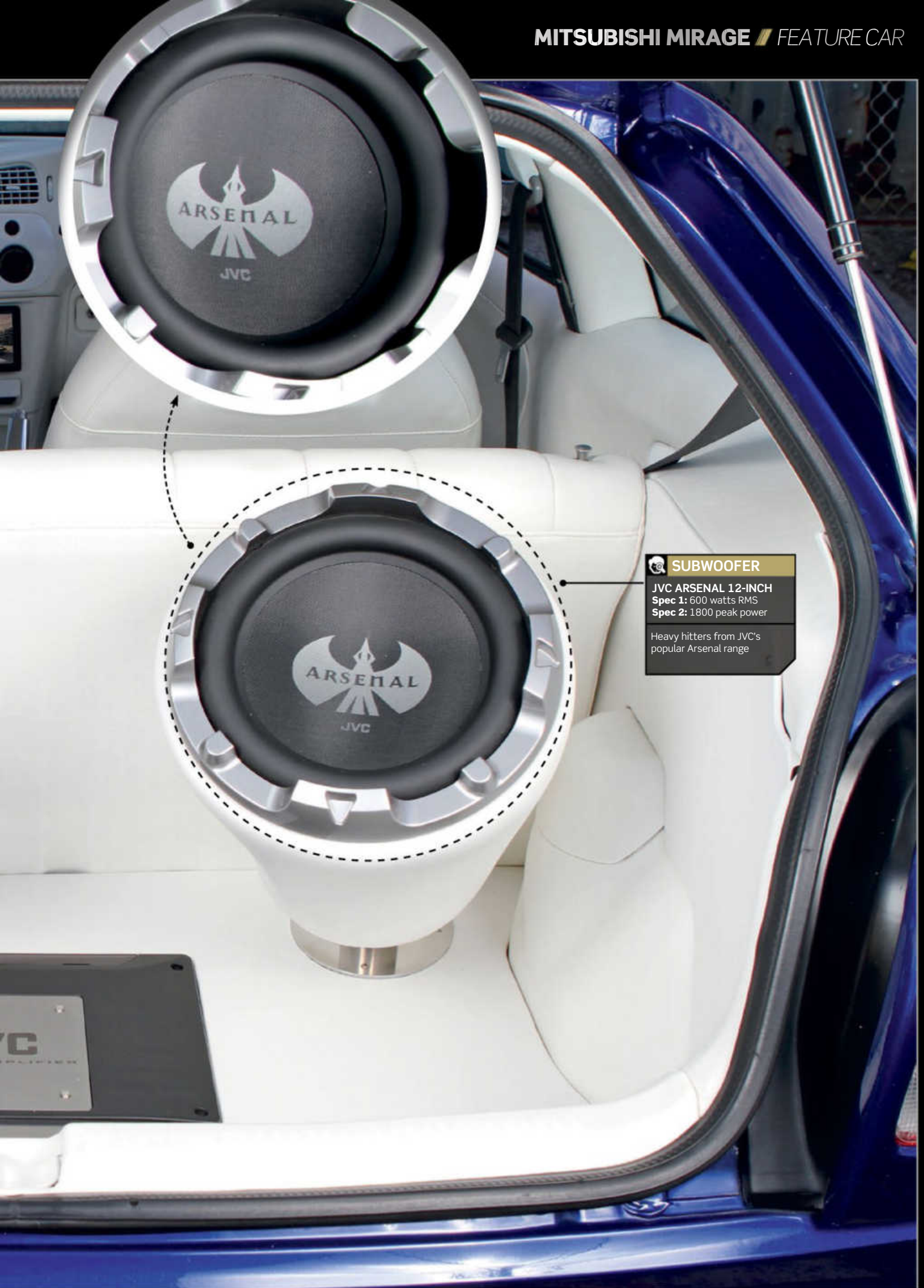
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**HEADREST LCD****JVC KV-MH6510****Spec 1:** 6.5-inch LCD screen**Spec 2:** 280,800 pixels

The JVC LCD screens have been meticulously integrated into the headrests



SUBWOOFER

JVC ARSENAL 12-INCH

Spec 1: 600 watts RMS

Spec 2: 1800 peak power

Heavy hitters from JVC's popular Arsenal range



masterpiece itself. Stainless steel, chrome, blue/violet (to match the exterior) and other visual enhancements have been applied here. Steven even went to the lengths of building the exhaust system himself (aided by Norm Hinton) with stainless headers and 3-inch turbo muffler.

Steven himself states, "one of the things I love so much about this car is that it was a complete re-build. Nothing was left untouched." And it certainly shows.

The same care and attention to detail has been carried through into the interior. Here the

whole thing was stripped and re-built with an all-encompassing white leather theme accented with an attractive Billet Specialties steering wheel.

The white leather is contrasted on the car's floor (highlighted with strategically-placed downlight-style LEDs) with black and white carpet while the cabin itself has chrome and steel relief in the handbrake lever and other controls. Speco boost and tachometer gauges are placed on the centre console and A-pillar respectively. It must be said that all this crisply clean whiteness actually looks quite stunning. ▶



TECH SPECS

owner Steven Page

vehicle 1996 Mitsubishi Mirage

engine: Mitsubishi 2L Turbo

transmission: 5-speed manual

exhaust: 3-inch Stainless Turbo muffler

suspension: Monroe shocks, King springs

brakes: VR4 Galant front, Proton Satia rear, painted calipers

wheels: Intro Twisted Vista 18-inch

SYSTEM

source: JVC KW-AVX835 7-inch DVD head unit

front speakers: JVC Arsenal splits

rear speakers: JVC Arsenal splits

subwoofers: 2 x JVC Arsenal 12-inch subwoofers

front & rear amplifiers: 1 x JVC 4-channel amplifier

sub amplifiers: 1 x JVC amplifier

rear screen: 2 x JVC KV-MH6510 LCD screens in headrests, two LCD screens in passenger/driver floor, one LCD screen in engine bay

wiring: 0-gauge

installed by: Steven Page Eastside Kustom

credits: Eastside Kustoms, Creative Bodyworks, Fibers, Otech Electronics, Pooray, Norm, Pinko, mum and dad, Skidncruz, Two390 Customs and everybody else who helped along the way



ISTINTO INNOVATIVO

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ISTINTO
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DRIVER PROFILE

Name: Steven Page

Car: 1996 Mitsubishi Mirage

1. What got you into car electronics?

Basically I love music, loud music.

2. How long have you been into it for?

Since I was around 16.

3. Occupation?

Fire safety technician.

4. Favourite music for testing audio gear?

Hip Hop and also a bit of club music.

5. Dream car?

Too many to name, a Lambo is my dream but an achievable dream car would be a Range Rover Sport.

6. Other hobbies/interests?

Building cars, wakeboarding, mainly every sport. And gotta love a good night out...

7. Where to next?

I've spent way too much coin on this car so, for now, I'll enjoy it a little. I have finished Project 2, and looking at Project 3 so more cars to come. And more pumping systems.



FULL ARSENAL


For audio visual goodness inside the car Steven chose to go with the worthy JVC Arsenal range. Because everything in this car has been re-built and customised, the installation had a bit of freedom in terms of its style and theme.

The signal starts with a neatly integrated JVC KW-AVX835 7-inch multimedia head unit which hands over to JVC Arsenal amplification. The amps have been flush mounted on the hatch's floor (all surrounded in white leather) while the custom "bongo drum" enclosure pods for the Arsenal subwoofers seem to hover directly above. They're actually suspended via a clever stainless steel arm that connects to the enclosure's rear panel.

The JVC Arsenal splits are installed on the custom trim in the wing doors while screens are seemingly everywhere. For starters, the front seat headrests feature JVC KV-MH6510 6.5-inch LCD screens while the cabin's front area floor sports two more JVC monitors on either side (passenger and driver).

Finally a single screen has been placed flush in a chromed panel in the engine bay. We'd say this has been done in order to provide a visual distraction when admiring the jaw-dropping engine rebuild. Here the engine bay is glorified with a cornucopia of chrome, steel and violet blue the same as the exterior colour. And no element has been spared the beautification process... the bay is really an eye-opener on how to present an engine for show.

CONCLUSION

From wing doors, to glorious exterior colour, plush and lux leather interior, to the majesty of the JVC Arsenal gear, this Mitsubishi Mirage has it all. It's topped-off by the glory of the engine bay. Take a look; it's no mirage - you'll understand why this car has won a number of awards around the country. Steven Page and the Eastside Kustoms team should really be proud. More kudos still from us at *InCar* to add to their already bountiful arsenal... 



SILVER



This SS Ute has provided a blank canvas for some pretty artful Rockford Fosgate-based audio painting in its massive rear tray. Story **Ed Kramer** Images **Ben Hosking**

TRAY





The refabricated tray area features a custom lid underside with LEDs and custom tray enclosures for the speakers, subwoofers & monitors.



The practicalities associated with the good ole' Aussie Ute are manifold. In your normal use, the rear tray can provide a large hauling and carrying area for all manner of load.

Of course, in this case, the load is a truly awesome sound system. And this ain't no ordinary Ute either. This is a silver-clad beauty which has been immaculately customised in and out. Owner George Aspite, in conjunction with Luke Clifton on the audio install side and John Fennick on the extensive engine mods, has designed a killer Ute here.

HEAVY METAL

The interior has been subtly modified and provides comfort, luxury and ergonomics. The seats were replaced with VE GTS seats in two-toned grey leather and the same tones were applied to the retrimmed steering wheel. Various



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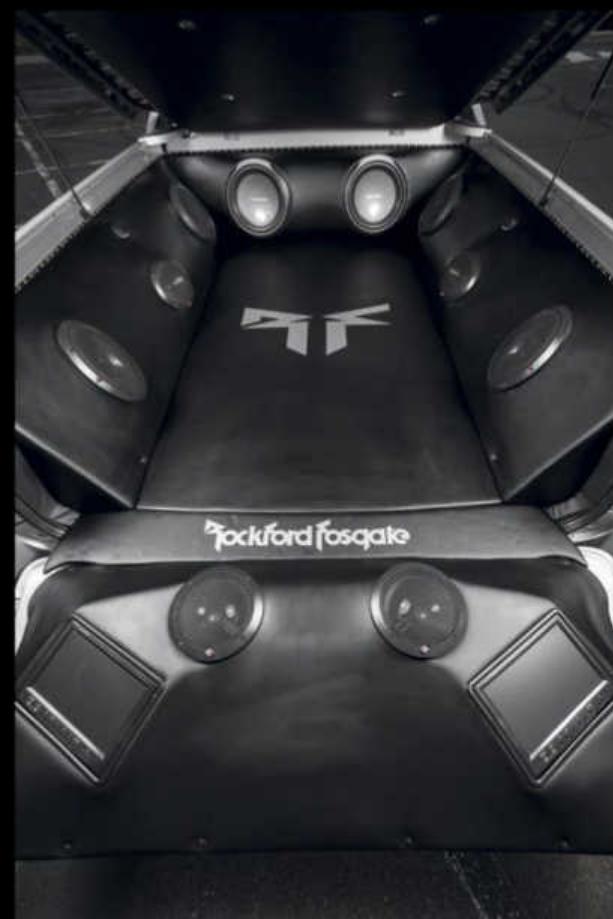
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TECH SPECS

owner: George Aspite

vehicle: 2003 Holden VY SS Ute

engine: Cast iron 6L stroked to 6.6L

induction: DuSpeed OTR 90mm Holley TB

intake: Fast LSX R

internals: Manley Crank, rods and pistons, AFR heads, Howards Racing carb

transmission: 6-speed manual

exhaust: 17/8 Headers, high flow cats, dual 3-inch exhaust

brakes: AP Racing 4-piston

clutch: Textralia Z Grip

suspension: OZ Racing coilovers front & rear

wheels: MC Racing 20x8.5 front, 20x9.5 rear

tyres: 245/30/20 front, 275/30/20 rear

SYSTEM

source: Clarion VX401

front speakers: Rockford Fosgate T1652-S 6.5-inch splits

rear speakers: Rockford Fosgate T1652-S 6.5-inch splits

subwoofers: 2 x Rockford Fosgate P3 shallow subwoofers

front amplifiers: Rockford Fosgate T800 4-channel amplifier

sub amplifiers: Rockford Fosgate T1000 1bdCP monobloc

rear monitors: 2 x 9-inch TFT LCD monitors

tray kit: 4 x Rockford Fosgate 1692 6x9s, 2 x Rockford Fosgate 165 and 2 x 165S splits. 2 x Rockford Fosgate T800 4-channel & 1 x T1000 monobloc amplifiers.

battery: Additional battery in tray

lighting: Blue LEDs, downlights in custom panel on underside of tray lid

installed by: Luke Clifton

total build time: Four year and still going

total installation cost: Approximately \$8000

credits: Luke Clifton for the audio install and John Fennick Race Engines



dash sections and door accents were replaced with custom-painted parts in a silver foil-like crinkled metal look.

Depo Racing gauges were also installed while the entire rear wall was retrimmed. Custom fibreglass subwoofer boxes were constructed and mounted behind each seat. Custom fibreglass pods were also fabricated for the speakers in the quarter window trim panels. These were then highlighted with LED lights. The consistency of the colour scheme make the interior of this Ute very classy indeed.

The good work is carried through to the exterior too. A down to bare metal respray in stunning Quicksilver metallic while an SSX front bar with a custom grille were installed. A 'Savage' custom bonnet was chosen for its 'go fast' appearance as it almost follows the curve incline of the front windscreen.

All badges were removed and a special custom rear infill panel was constructed to house the number plate in a neater, better integrated fashion.

Stunning MC Racing black gloss 20-inch wheels provide a contrast to the silver and undeniably provide added visual appeal in conjunction with the not-too-over-the-top body kit. Further appeal is provided by the custom tray lid which is motorised and controllable via an in-cabin switch.

UTE'S A'ROCKIN'

George's Ute is crammed with audio kit - all Rockford Fosgate except for the head unit - but it's all so well installed that it seems almost a stealth deal (in the case of the cabin). We mentioned the fibre pods in the doors which house Rockford Fosgate T1652 S splits while the fibre custom sub boxes behind the seats house Rockford Fosgate P3 shallow subwoofers.

The speakers are driven via Rockford Fosgate T800 4-channel amplifiers while the subs take their juice from a T1000-1bdCP monobloc. Signal comes from a Clarion VX401 head unit and the install eschews any of processing other than the unit's own in-built EQ.

The tray's gear list is extensive and as such it requires its own power supply/battery. Underneath the motorised and blue LED-lit tray top you'll feast your eyes on the extent of the gear in use.

The tray house everything loudspeaker-wise. Here we have a customised black vinyl-covered enclosure arrangement spanning the sides and front which house the subwoofers at the front and the speakers and lighting around the side panels. Even the smaller rear door houses screens and speakers!

The subwoofers are twin Rockford Fosgate P2 drivers facing outwards. The sides are lined with four Rockford Fosgate T1692 6x9 speakers (two ▶



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? DRIVER PROFILE

Name: George Aspite
Car: 2003 Holden Commodore SS Ute

1. What got you into car electronics?
The joy of listening to loud music.

2. How long have you been into it for?
Over 20 years.

3. Occupation?
Abrasive blaster.

4. Favourite music for testing audio gear?
Anything with bass.

5. Dream car?
1985 VK Group A or 1968 SS Camaro.

6. Other hobbies/interests?
V8 Supercars, NRL, car mods.

7. Where to next?
Possible upgrade to tray install and for the engine a Magnuson Supercharger.



on the back door which are flanked by two 9-inch TFT LCD monitors) which are complimented by two Rockford Fosgate T165 and T165 S speakers. A custom panel has been fabricated and installed on the underside of the main tray cover which houses a number of downlights and blue strip LED lighting around its edges. Smack in the middle of the tray you'll see a large 'RF' in Rockford Fosgate trademark font styling.

CONCLUSION

This Ute has built itself quite the reputation... and deservedly so. It won 'Best ICE' at Harry's Café at Liverpool in 2013 while also snatching the 'Best Street Ute' in 2014's Sydney Royal Easter Show and in that same year at the Jamieson Hotel in Penrith.

It's no surprise really; this install has been done with utter skill in terms of the tray, with subtle craftsmanship in its interior design and, finally, its powerful street look also makes it a strong visual presence. Beaut Ute, we'd say. 🚗

HELL FOR



LEATHER!

This stunning Mazda RX7 served as an extraordinary blank canvas for the best Option Audio has to offer and is a poster-car for the ultimate in the installers' craft. Story **Ed Kramer** Images **Ben Hosking**





Mustard leather goodness as far as the eye can see... we like it!



We get all sorts here at *InCar*. Although predominantly we see Commodores and Falcons, we also get our fair share of European and Japanese models. And among all those we see installs that range from the exotically extreme to the stealthily subtle. This Mazda RX7, of course, falls into the Empire of the Sun's league while, as far as the gear and installation, it can comfortably be classed as, um... RXtreme to the max.

OPTIONED OUT

Even though this RX7 is an all-round standout, we'll start its story with the astonishing Gold-winner-at-Motorex interior which was done by Eastside Kustom Trim. The car's interior has been ►

Without History There Would Be No Future



In 1932, Blaupunkt released the Autosuper AS 5, the world's first car radio. It had 5 tubes and weighed 15kg.

The inspiration didn't stop...



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YEARS



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- 1988 - First RDS car radio
- 1980 - First stereo-cassette-radio combination
- 1974 - First car radio with ARI traffic news detection
- 1969 - World's first stereo car radio
- 1952 - World's first VHF car radio
- 1932 - First car radio in Europe



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TECH SPECS

owner: Robert Bisagna

vehicle: 2001 Mazda RX7

engine: 13B twin rotor

induction: PWR radiator, custom PWR

front mount intercooler

controllers: Apexi Power FC

exhaust: Custom 3-inch

transmission: 5-speed

suspension: BC coilovers

wheels: 20 x 8.5 Simmons FR

Chrome plated

tyres: Nitto Invo 245/30 front,
255/30 rear

SYSTEM

source: Pioneer AVH-P8400BH

multimedia head unit

front & rear speakers: 16 x Option

Audio OA66PRO11 Pro-Series splits

subwoofers: 2 x Option Audio

OA12PRO11 Pro-Series subwoofers

front & rear amplifiers: 3 x Option

Audio OAC160 4-channel amplifiers

subwoofer amplifiers: 1 x Option Audio

OAX2000 monobloc amplifier

front & rear screens: 4 x Option Audio

7-inch monitors

battery: Heavy duty battery

lighting: 14 interior downlights
throughout

sound deadening: Dynamat

installed by: Fibreglass and custom

wiring done by self and brother. Todd

at Eastside Kustom Trim for custom

leather interior and console

Sponsor: Mark at Option Audio

Australia

credits: My brother Adrian for his help throughout the build, Todd at Eastside Kustoms, the car would not be what it is today without his talent. Dan and the boys at Kingpin Custom Paint & Panel, Johnny and Lisa at JC Racing, Bass and Fuf at 2Sus Custom Resprays, Chris at Heasman Steering, Kassim at Northern Beaches Wheel & Tyre Centre



The rear seat was removed in order to accommodate the extensive customising and massive audio installation.

totally re-fitted with fibreglass construction lined in honey mustard Italian leather. This has been used extensively throughout the interior – wisely too because it is truly beautiful. The Evo VI seats have been modified as a result of inspiration by Ferrari 458 Italia bucket seats. The rear seats were dispensed with to allow for the massive audio visual system – more on that anon.

Enhancements were also added, such as WRX STi pedals, an Issota shift knob, custom door handles and more. The honey mustard Italian leather has been used on the steering wheel, the dash, the console... just about everywhere. From descriptions it may all sound too much but it's actually captivatingly attractive. The same colour has been used on the car's flooring, doors and, in fact, the entire interior. Chrome steel strip accents have been used sparingly to enhance the look around the foot wells and on the centre console extension. On the dash just to the left of the instrument cowl, a small custom pod covered in perforated leather houses oil, voltage and boost meters.

Custom stainless steel switches around the gear shifter were constructed for the audio system controls while custom door handles and colour-coded LED power window switches were also designed.

The centre console has been extended with a large arch that sweeps backwards past where the rear seats used to be. While also looking awesome, it serves as a form of bracket for two Option Audio 7-inch LCD screens.

TEAM OF SPEAKERS

The gear compliment starts with a Pioneer AVH-P8400BH multimedia head unit. Amplification is via three Option Audio OAC160 4-channel amplifiers which run an astonishing number of speakers – namely no less than 16 Option Audio OA66PRO11 splits. A monster Option Audio OAX2000 monobloc amplifier runs the two ►

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massively-built Option Audio OA12PRO11 12-inch subwoofers.

The rear half of the RX7 is actually taken up by a full custom base for most of the speakers (aside for the ones in the doors) and the subwoofers. Where the rear seats were is an inclined enclosure which houses the two OA12PRO11 subwoofers - which face forward diaphragm up - and four OA66PRO11 splits; two per side. Facing out towards the back are another two OA66PRO11s per side. The eight tweeters have been mounted in the hatch door's upper window frame which is lined with perforated leather. Beneath the arched screens stand are two flush-mounted amplifiers being the OAX2000 monobloc and one of the OAC160 4-channel amps. The other two OAC160s are paralleled angled to the hatch's side panels. The hatch door is home to a bank of four LED lights (part of the total 14) for the requisite ambience while being lined in... you guessed it, honey mustard leather gorgeousness.

A further three OA66PRO11 speakers are housed in custom enclosures on the doors - the front pillars house the tweeters - and just below another Option Audio LCD screen has been flush mounted.

The exterior of the RX7 is a show-stopper... simple ultra-sleek elegance. The car was debadged while the rear wheel arches were tubbed. The side indicators were shaved as were the rear fog lights and rear hatch.

The car was resprayed by 2sus in House of Kolor's stunning Kandy Brandy Wine and, it has to be said, it is an astonishing result in terms of the exterior and interior colour scheme.

The chromed Simmons FR 20-inch wheels with Nitto Invo tyres and the lowered stance gives the car an aggressive look while not diminishing the overall appearance one iota. This is a thoroughly thought-out and jaw-droppingly gorgeous result.

CONCLUSION

We have to say this RX7's owner, Robert Bisegna, is one lucky guy. He has chosen what is one of the most attractive-looking designs - despite it dating back a few years - and has challenged the best of the supercars from the Italian houses. We see all manner of cars but for us to say that it's one of the best we've seen is a massive compliment indeed. Stunning. 🏆



DEVIL ON





F A R I D E

It may be Demonic by name but this Commodore Ute is awesomely customised and features a superb kit of audio... we think it's downright heavenly. Story **Ed Kramer** Images **Sandra Wickman**



At *InCar* we're proud to feature some of the best car installations in the country (and with our USA correspondent we stretch to that part of the globe too). They vary from the OTT to the somewhat stealthy and then everything in between. This Commodore Ute is right up the end of the scale that shouts "look at me, I'm awesome!" And we'd have to wholeheartedly, indisputably, agree.

It's Demonic by name and by colour too. It's a stunning mix of brilliant red and devilish-themed graphic designs that have been applied with the utmost in illustration skills. From the fires of Hell on the front to the demons on the engine, bonnet, tray top and tailgate, all is impressive with its colour and artistry. Hell, even the Lexani rims are airbrushed (pardon the pun).

Equal artistry has been applied to the interior of the Ute both in terms of its aesthetic design and the care taken to install the stunning audio system. ▶

 **polk**

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TECH SPECS

owner: Alan Hamilton

vehicle: 2005 Holden Commodore HSV Ute



engine: 6-Litre LS2

induction: Cold air

intake: Duspeed OTR

internals: 231-239 Comp Cam

transmission: Tremec 6-speed with rip shifter

clutch: 427

suspension: Pedders Extreme coilovers

brakes: HSV

exhaust: Pacemaker headers, 200 series cats

and custom 3-inch mandrel bent twin system

wheels: 20x8.5 Lexani custom airbrushed

tyres: 245/30/20 Advanti

SYSTEM

source: Pioneer AVX

front speakers: 4 x Vibe Audio BD6C-V1 Black Death 6.5-inch splits

rear speakers: 4 x Vibe Audio BD6C-V1 Black Death 6.5-inch splits, 2 x Vibe Audio BDPRO12-V1 12-inch coaxial speakers in the tray

subwoofers: 2 x Vibe Audio BA-10V4 Black Air 10-inch subwoofers behind seats, 4 x Vibe Audio BDPRO10W-V1 Black Death 10-inch subwoofers in the tray

front amplifiers: 2 x Vibe Audio BLACKBOXS4-V1 Black Death 4-channel amplifiers

rear amplifiers: 5 x Vibe Audio BASS1 Black Death monobloc amplifiers for entire tray

subwoofer amplifiers: 2 x Vibe Audio BDB1-V1 Black Death monobloc amplifiers in cabin

wiring: Stinger 0-gauge, Stinger ANG fuse holders and distribution blocks

battery: 6 x Optima 200 batteries

sound deadening: 100 x kg of Roadkill throughout

total installation cost: Over \$30,000

installed by: Jesters Custom Audio

total build time: 14 months

credits: Jared, Justin and all the crew at Vibe Audio Australia, Paul at Yipo's airbrush Townsville, Ryan from Advanced Airbrush Sydney, Rob and Suzie from Jesters Custom Audio Townsville, Dave from Hi-Tech Audio in Cairns, Bones, Pauly and Frank from Frankie's Auto Electrics in Sydney, Peter from Robbo's Upholstery Townsville, Dallas from Bob Parkes exhaust Townsville, Sue from Sue's Embroidery Townsville, Fiona my lovely fiancé from Novelty Imports, and all the countless mates who helped out with a spanner or a beer







The attention to detail is absolutely phenomenal... the colours and themes are consistently carried through the build while the installation standards are top shelf.

DEVIL IN THE DETAILS

Needless to say at the level that this Ute has been modified there was extensive preparation involved. And even *that* was taken to an extreme level. To the lengths of actually purchasing a "donor shell" to use as a mock up to make sure all aspects of the installation actually fitted. Roadkill sound deadener was applied throughout the cabin while MDF was used to construct the frame for the custom subwoofer boxes.

The interior and tray were shaped with fibreglass blankets and dummy-fitted to ensure proper fit and alignment. Once in place, the blankets were moulded to shape and resin was poured over for further shaping, sanding and

preparation for the airbrushing artwork, which actually extended to every available aspect of the car that could be removed for airbrush treatment (this included pillars, kickplates, centre console, gauge pods, engine, etc.).

The custom fabrication was done by Jespers Custom Audio, who worked on the fibreglass panel behind the seats, the A-pillars and the tray. Custom enclosures and panels were fabricated for the amplifiers, speakers and subwoofers while also allowing for a comprehensive lighting system. Some of this extensive work was also shared by leading car audio and installation company Frankie's Auto Electrics who also were responsible for the computer generated LED lighting system.

? DRIVER PROFILE

Name: Alan Hamilton

Car: 2005 Holden Commodore HSV Ute

1. What got you into car electronics?

Just started out wanting a decent car system and went from there.

2. How long have you been into it for?

Five years and still going.

3. Occupation?

Retired.

4. Favourite music for testing audio gear?

Anything with good acoustics and a wide range.

5. Dream car?

Old school. Either 1968 Camaro or 1969 Mustang. Anything with a tough stance.

6. Other hobbies/interests?

Not enough time for anything else!

7. Where to next?

Would love to take the step up from Street Class to Elite at Summernats but it's a pipe dream for now. I'll just keep fiddling to make it an even more competitive car to justify the time, effort and confidence Vibe Audio has placed on us.

COOL VIBES

Vibe Audio is the componentry of choice here. Demonic's owner Alan Hamilton was very clear from the outset that he strictly wanted a system for ultimate SQ, not SPL. To this end he chose a mix of some of Vibe Audio's best.

But the signal flow starts with a Pioneer multimedia head unit which shares amplifica- ➤

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tion duties with Vibe Audio BlackBoxS4-V1 4-channel amplifier running the four pairs of Vibe Audio BD6C-V1 6.5-inch splits. The tray houses five, yes five, Vibe Audio BlackDeath Bass 1 monobloc amplifiers to run two Vibe Audio BA-10V4 Black Air 10-inch subwoofers behind seats, four Vibe Audio BDPRO10W-V1 Black Death 10-inch subwoofers in the tray. Two further subs in the cabin, Vibe Audio BA-10V4 10-inch subwoofers, are run via an additional duo of Vibe Audio BlackDeath BDb1-V1 monobloc amplifiers.

The massive power requirements demand no less than five Optima batteries for the system and one additional one for the general running of the vehicle. Stinger 0-gauge wiring and Stinger ANG fuse holders have also been chosen. A massive 100kg of Roadkill sound deadener was used throughout the Ute.

Jesters Custom Audio has moulded the entire tray area in fibreglass in a flowing, almost organic, river of Hellish magma in gloss red and airbrushed flame accents. The amp rack and the subwoofers (in their own MDF



sub-enclosures) are seemingly randomly floating on the lava.

The door trims were also customised with enclosures lined with black leather with red stitching.

Aside from the custom trimming, the cabin features enhancements such as airbrushed pillars (extending to the door frames), a centre console in airbrushed red with random flames – which extends on to the custom fabricated enclosure towards the rear of the cabin – a red gloss frame around the instrumentation and air conditioning instrument/control clusters, a devilish red skull on the gear stick, and much more. Of course, all is highlighted with perimeter and general lighting from the highly sophisticated lighting system by Frankie's.

CONCLUSION

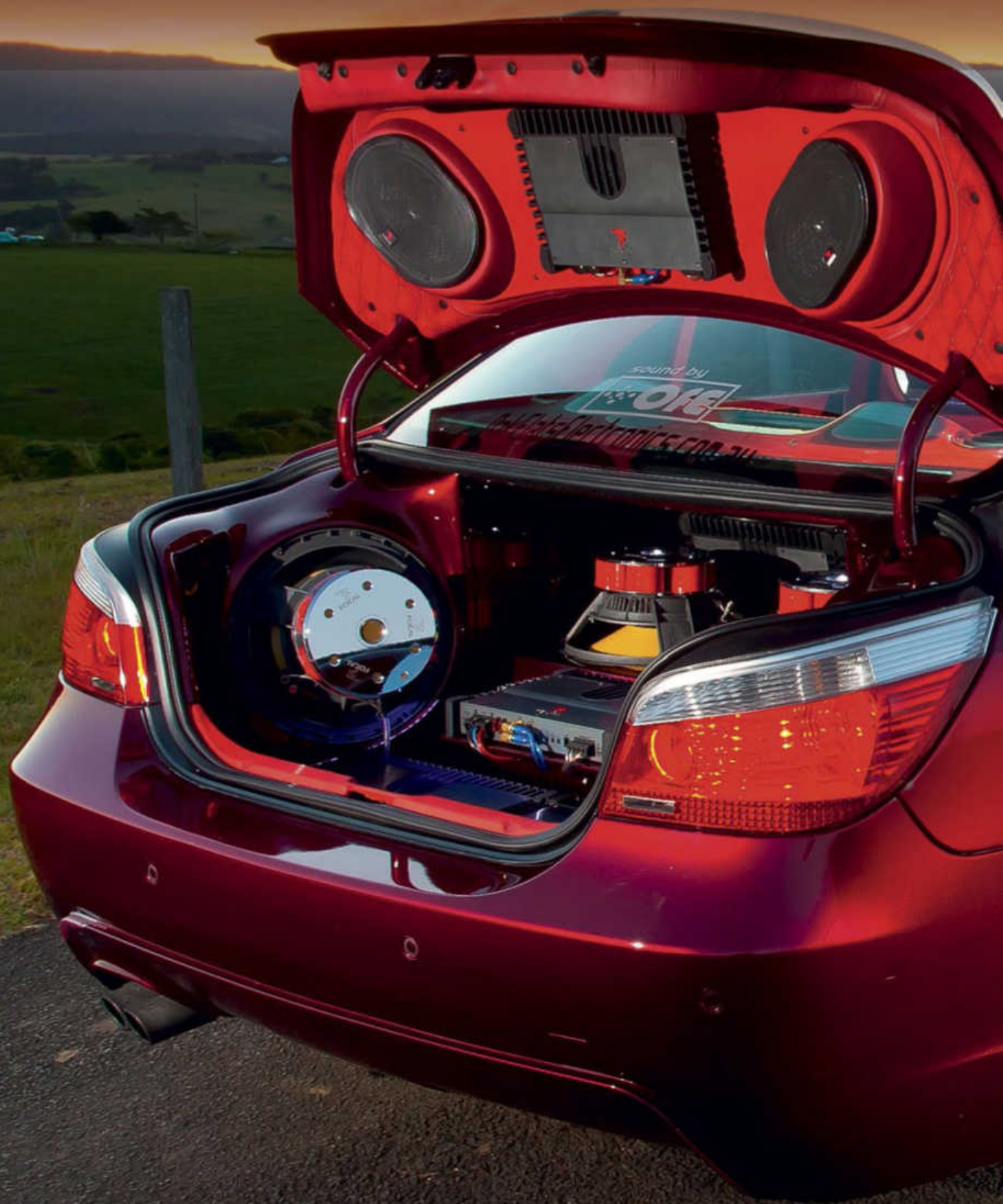
There have been a few cases where mere words cannot fully describe the extent of customisation and overall features of an installation. This Demonic Ute is a poster boy for that. Truly, the best way to appreciate this masterful installation is to check out the images within the feature. This HSV Ute is something quite special, alright. It demonstrates the wonders that can be achieved when a passionate owner teams up with some of the best people in the car audio and installation business.

We could see ourselves jumping in and driving this magnificent Ute, with the audio blaring the chorus line "Like a bat out of Hell!" 🖤

"DEMONIC'S OWNER ALAN HAMILTON WAS VERY CLEAR FROM THE OUTSET THAT HE STRICTLY WANTED A SYSTEM FOR ULTIMATE SQ, NOT SPL."



BLOOD



RED BEEMER BEAUTY



Brilliant blood red throughout and chokers with Focal speaker goodness, this BMW has been customised to the hilt and would be one blissfully booming Beemer.

Story Ed Kramer Images Tony Rabbitte



In yet another deep red feature car, this time a stunning BMW 5 Series, we see all aspects of the interior, exterior and sound system taken to the utmost level. No detail has been spared here, and the entire car is so tech-accomplished, its makeover so thoroughly executed, that it really would make for a show stopper anywhere in the world.

I SEE RED!

The story starts with owner Robert Nadeski commissioning the experts at Oak Flats Electronics to transform the Beemer into a visually stunning statement while also designing and installing an SQ system aimed at top performance.

To this end, a stream of Focal gear was agreed upon to provide the path to meet the mandate. Also to be taken into consideration were important performance aspects such as enclosure size and volume and speaker placement. Important in any installation is the preparation, and sound deadening in particular. Here the vehicle has been "sound deadened from ►

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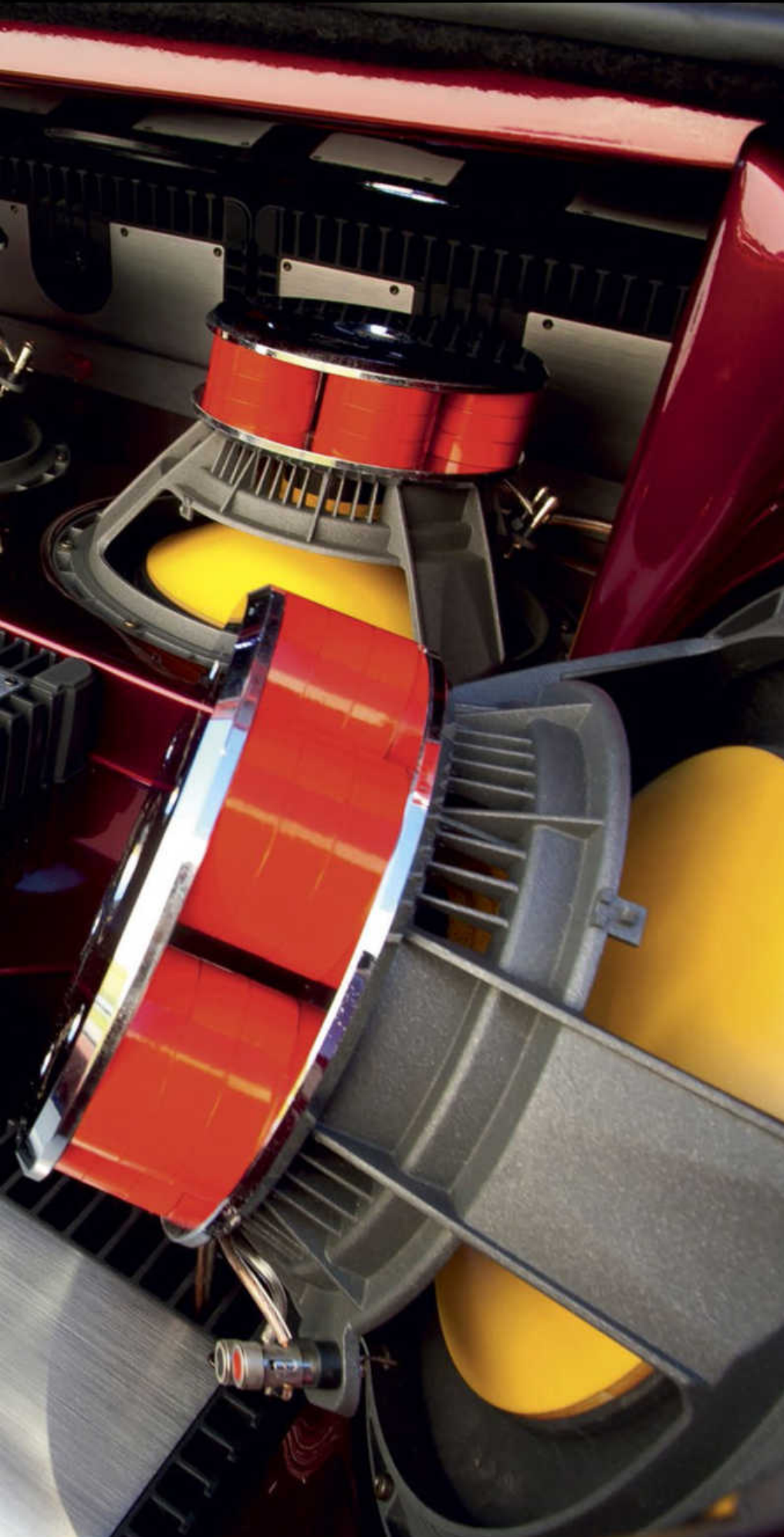
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MA1400BT

IPX4 Watertight Face Mechless AM/FM Multimedia Receiver
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TECH SPECS

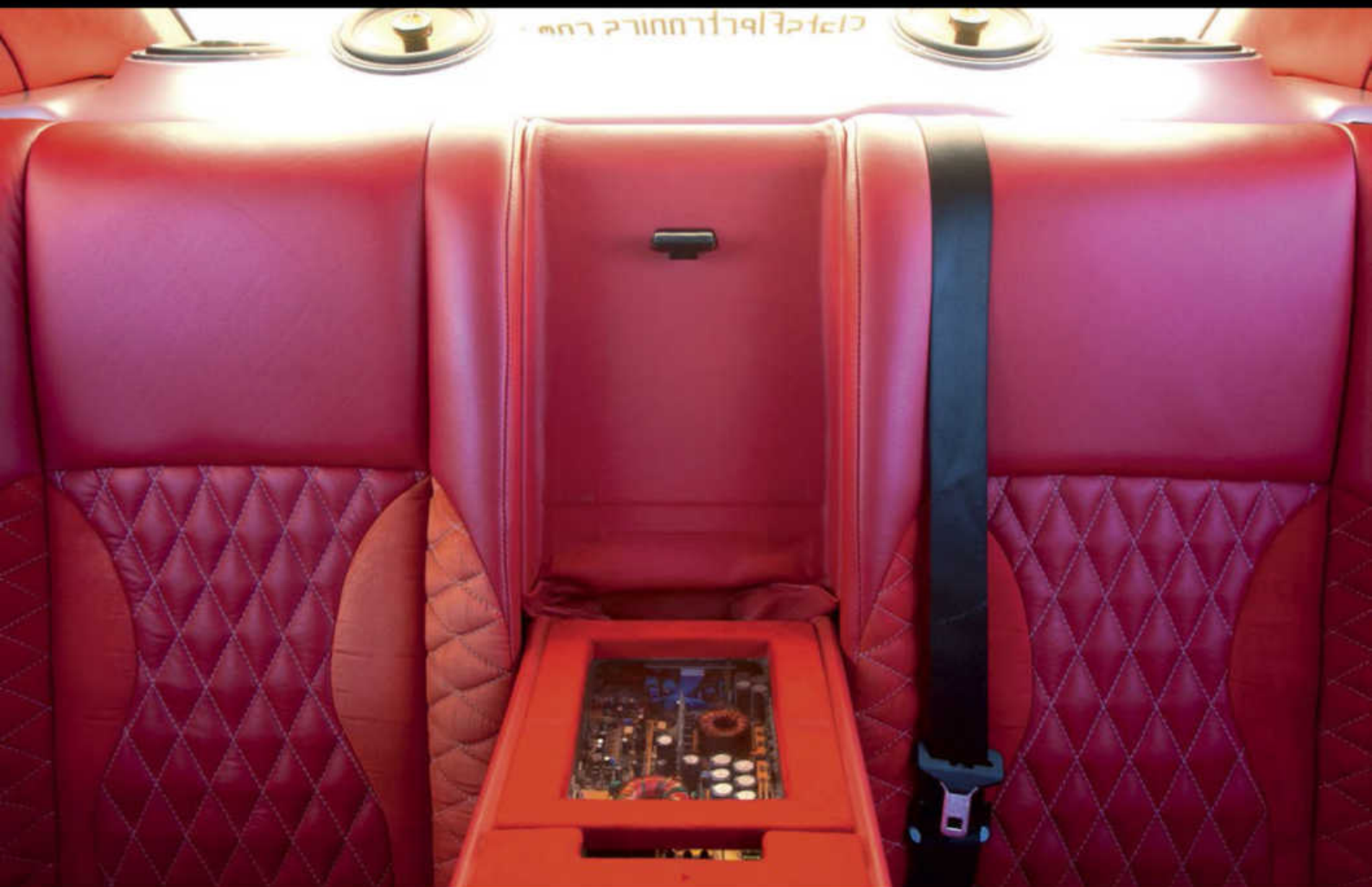
owner: Robert Nadeski
vehicle: 2005 BMW 5 Series

engine: 2.5L
transmission: Automatic
suspension: BMW Sports
brakes: Factory
exhaust: Factory
wheels: 22-inch
tyres: 35 series

SYSTEM

source: Alpine INE-W910 multimedia head unit & NVE-M300P navigation unit
front speakers: 4 x Focal 165KR 6.5-inch split speakers
rear speakers: 4 x Focal 165KRC 6.5-inch coaxial speakers, 2 x Focal Polyglass 6x9 coaxials in boot
subwoofers: 4 x Focal 33KX 13-inch subwoofers
front amplifiers: 1 x Focal FPS 4160 4-channel amplifier
rear amplifiers: 1 x Focal FPS 4160 4-channel amplifier
subwoofer amplifiers: 4 x Focal FPS 1500 monobloc amplifiers
front screen: 2 x 5-inch LCD monitors in doors
rear screen: 2 x 5-inch LCD headrest monitors, 2 x 5-inch LCD monitors in doors
battery: Optima D34
lighting: LED lighting in doors and footwells
sound deadening: Dynamat
installed by: Oak Flats Electronics
credits: The Oak Flats Electronics (OFE) team for all the design efforts and hard work installing and modifying this system





top to bottom” as Jarrod from OFE stated. Also, OFE was given guidelines from Robert to make the car as attractive as possible, to modify whatever is required, but to keep it tastefully-styled and in the vein of the original design. To that end, all the interior trim metalwork has been smoothed, polished and/or repainted to contrast with the glorious red retrim. So the interior is a stunning mix of deep red and silver metal work accents, with the red extending to all door trims, leather seats, steering wheel, gear shifter and cowl, dash, centre console, etc. The metal trimming crosses the dash and spills down from the switching instrument panel.

The same colour is also used on all interior side panels, sun visors and the roof lining which also features downlights, supporting the LEDs in the footwells and doors, to provide that all-important ambience.

FOCAL POINT

Now on to this superb sound – and visual – system installation. We can start at the head unit, an Alpine INE-W910 with its NVE-M300P navigation module, which has been centrally-mounted on the dash flush on its own red leather pod. The head unit hands over to a total of six Focal amplifiers split between two FPS 4100 4-channel amplifiers to run all the speakers and four Focal FPS 1500 monobloc amplifiers for the battery of subwoofers.

The speaker system is made up of a four Focal 165KR component speakers for the front ▶



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DRIVER PROFILE

Name: Robert Nadeski
Car: 2005 BMW 5 Series

- 1. What got you into car electronics?**
The love of music.
- 2. How long have you been into it for?**
Ten years.
- 3. Occupation?**
Sales & Marketing.
- 4. Favourite music for testing audio gear?**
Hip Hop and Hi NRG.
- 5. Dream car?**
Lamborghini.
- 6. Other hobbies/interests?**
The gym.
- 7. Where to next?**
Next project from here...





doors, another four for the rear parcel shelf, this time Focal 165KRC coaxials, and a pair of Focal Polyglass 6x9 coaxials on the boot lid. The subwoofers have been installed in the boot, magnet up in all their chrome plate and red magnet glory, and they are four Focal 33KX 13-inch drivers.

The door speakers have been mounted in custom silver panels which provide a very attractive contrast to the predominant red. The tweeters are mounted high on small red leather-lined pods into the A-pillars. A custom enclosure in red spreads across the car on the parcel shelf and is home to the 165KRC coaxials while another custom enclosure houses the Polyglass 6x9s either side of one of the amps. The aforementioned 33KX subwoofers are fitted in the boot on custom fibreglass red gloss insertions. One each on rounded enclosures integrated into the boot's sides and two on a squarer cabinet towards the rear of the boot. Behind these last subs, you'll see two of the Focal amplifiers on a vertical rack providing the visual background. The remaining three amps fill-out the rest of the boot and have been organized with two flush mounted on the boot floor and one on a dedicated red gloss tray in a 'floating' arrangement. The arm rest and cup holder drop-down unit has been modified to fit the crossovers under a plexiglass panel. The superb images in this feature depict the extraordinary craftsmanship, design and installation work.

The system is augmented by a well-thought out visual component. So the Alpine head unit provides the AV front and centre on the dash while 5-inch LCD screens have been angle flush mounted high on to the red-trimmed door panels in both the front and rear passenger doors (above an OFE logo'd silver door panel). Two headrest monitors provide further visuals to rear passengers.

The B-em's exterior is a luxurious deep crimson, which carries through to the matching custom re-sprayed 22-inch multi-spoke wheels. The car has been debadged all around except for the proud Bavarian Motor Works trademark blue and white badge on the boot and bonnet. The look is quite extraordinary.

CONCLUSION

Owner Robert Nadeski presented some strong mandates to the Oak Flats Electronics crew. OFE took up the challenge and the result is a real show stopper of a car. Its attractive and immaculate exterior, superbly-finished interior and exceptional audio visual system make this a Beemer to be truly proud of. Das ist wunderbar! 🇩🇪

PREVIEW 2016 FEATURE CARS

You would have enjoyed the 'Gold' issue's rather special feature cars. Well, be prepared to be further impressed right into next year! We've got the most radically outrageous cars coming up for 2016.

You'll be amazed at the imaginative installations and massive systems in these awesome cars. They are true examples of

passionate owners pursuing excellence in sound quality and craftsmanship.

In fact, two of these — a silver Commodore and a stunning black VW Beetle — have come from Car Audio Masters specialist installers who approached us late in the year just to tease us too with magnificent examples of the car audio installation art. CAM installation

specialists spread the girth of the land and have provided us with some of the most extraordinary cars we've had the pleasure of featuring.

So, visit your newsagent, no, run there, or, better still, subscribe so you don't miss out on a single issue of InCar 2016... you might just see, within these pages, your absolute, inspirational dream car.





2016 SOUND IMAGE AWARDS INCAR

It's with great pleasure that we bring you the Australian InCar Entertainment Awards in this very special issue of our magazine.

Yes, it's gold and yes, it's lux. And the outstanding products you'll find here deserve the extravagance because they are the best of the best in each of their market spaces.

This year we've adapted to the market's movement by shuffling a couple of categories around in terms of price breaks while adjusting the single-DIN head unit space to a single all-encompassing class.

Ditto for the Active/Passive subwoofer category which now is more succinctly described as 'Loaded Enclosure' in order to incorporate all manner of subwooferage that is designed and delivered in its own

enclosure – whether active, passive, under-seat, slimline, etc.

Our judges have taken into consideration every single product reviewed throughout 2015 while also including a number of late arrivals that were assessed – in all aspects fitting our criteria – and are to appear formally reviewed in upcoming issues during 2016.

As has been the trend for the last few years, it's the multimedia head units that are evolving the in-car entertainment space. While amplifiers, speakers and subwoofers have made incremental advancements – new cone materials and revised amplification circuits – the multimedia head units are further adopting

the smartphone into the mobile entertainment field. Apple's CarPlay and Android Auto are replicating the operational and functional logic of the smartphone within the head unit's larger, and now equally responsive, touch screen. Apps are activated and navigated with the smartphone's familiar ease.

And these platforms, of course, also allow hands-free access to emails, text messages, Facebook, Twitter and much more while apps from Pandora, Spotify and others provide an endless kaleidoscope of music from around the world.

So, without further ado, jump on board and, together, let's embark on our sightseeing – and ear-caressing – trip around the world's best car audio.



SONY MEX-XB100BT WWW.SONY.COM.AU

As one of the world's largest electronics companies Sony can afford to provide large wads of cash to its R&D departments. And we'd bet that this is indeed the case because, when it comes to car audio products, Sony is able to provide superbly balanced level of features and price points while also keeping the quality at a steady high point.

And so is a case in point here with this year's winner of the Single-DIN head unit category. All of the above points – features, price and performance – have not been overlooked here and, in fact, Sony has provided oodles of power above the standard fare at this price point. Our review of the MEX-XB100BT says it

all when it states, "It handles all primary types of software including MP3, WMA, AAC, WAV and also FLAC. These can be input via disc, a high speed version 2.0 USB input which lives behind a small door on the face, or via 3.5mm analogue auxiliary input, also found on the face. It's also equipped with a version 3.0 Bluetooth chipset which not only handles telephonic duties but expands significantly upon this via a downloadable app called SongPal..."

Reviewer Marty Price continues, "the pre-outs prove themselves to be no trouble at all, easily going to near full volume without so much as a murmur of external hiss or noise. Running with amplifiers, these outputs provide clean, precise signal at a high voltage meaning your amplifier gains can stay a lot lower. Normally I don't spend much time beyond

standard testing with speaker level outputs but, come on... it would be remiss of me not to give these ones a shot to see if they're all they're cracked up to be.

Well my word; they're that and a whole lot more. Not so much running all four corners of the car but when you hook-up a smaller subwoofer up the rear channels and run the whole shebang with the processing, things start to become a whole lot more impressive, with sound banging out well placed, and with superb accuracy and volume."

In his conclusion Marty Price states that he considers the MEX-XB100BT to be a game changer that is able to run an entire system just on its own without struggling. It soars "the lofty heights" and can be considered a "one-tone" system solution without peer.





FUSION CA-CD850 WWW.FUSIONENTERTAINMENT.COM

Reviewer Scott Campbell found it impossible to find a better package of features and performance for the price of Fusion's CA-CD850.

Fusion has grown into a global powerhouse with distribution now across 30 countries, boasting subsidiaries in the USA, UK and,

of course, Australia. And the New Zealand company has certainly developed a reputation as a manufacturer offering value-for-money products that punch well above their weight.

Fusion's CA-CD850 will play almost any format you may care to try with it. So, you've got MPEG 1, 2 and 2.5, MP3, CD, CD-R and CD-RW. The four channels of MOSFET amplification make it an amplification solution for a full

speaker system or it can be augmented by external amplifiers – of which Fusion has a wide choice in terms of channel configurations and features. The CA-CD850 is well constructed, is endowed with a whole stream of connectivity options, a long features list and very good performance. And at the price of \$199 it may just be one of the best bargains in car audio right now.



PIONEER DEH-X8700DAB WWW.PIONEER.COM.AU

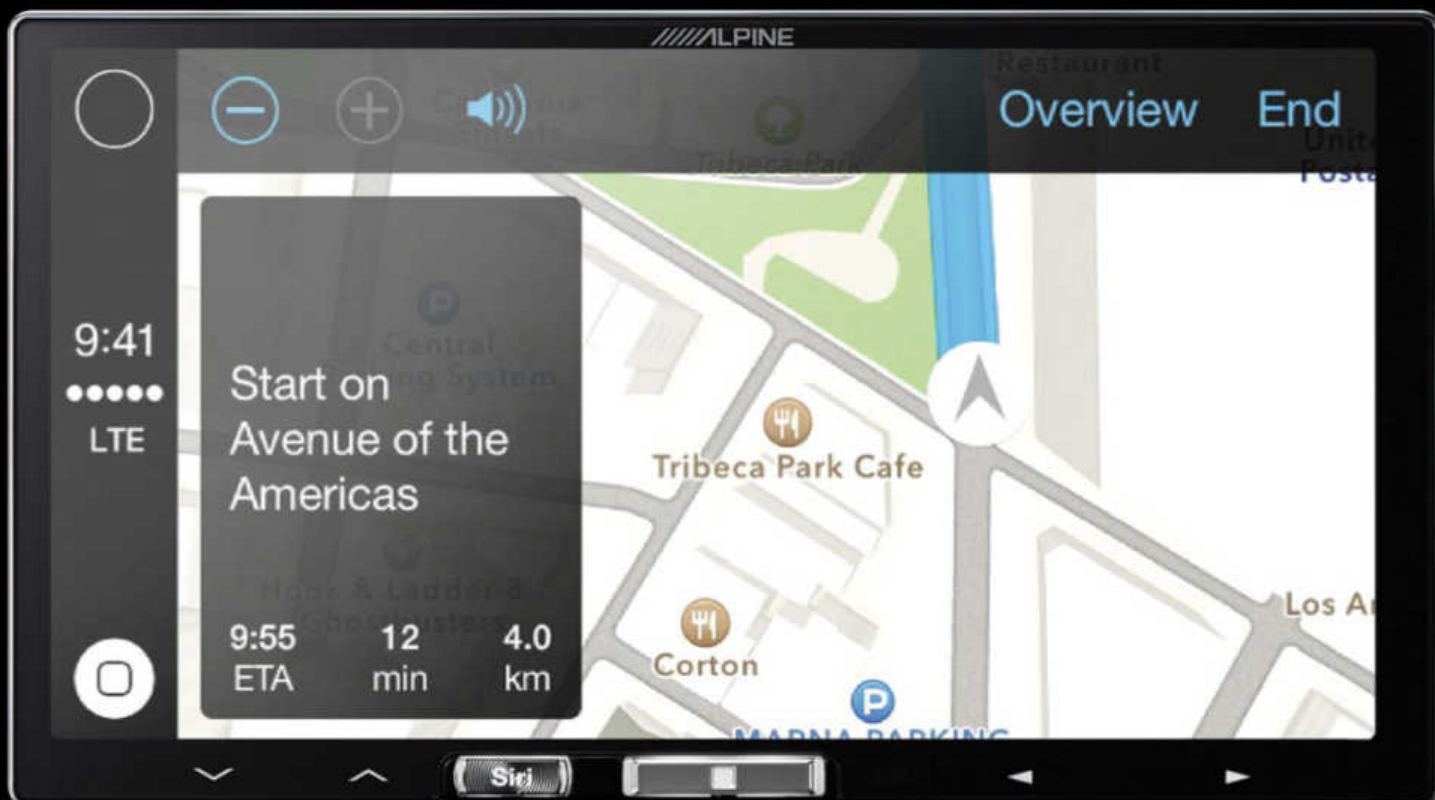
Discounting the highly-acclaimed PRS statement electronics, Pioneer's new flagship in the single-DIN space is the DEH-X8700DAB and a worthy range-topper it is too.

The DEH-X8700DAB features the latest analogue radio tuner chipset married to a powerful

aerial amplifier, with 18 FM slots and six AM slots as far as presets go. For digital radio the unit offers playback through the main three DAB bands via the optional An-DAB1 antenna. The in-built disc transport will play CD, CD-R and CD-RW while also recognising MP3, WMA, WAV, AAC and FLAC files provided they're stored within standard FAT protocols. Pioneer also provides its proprietary AppMode and

MixTrax software, Bluetooth version 3.0 for telephony and wireless audio playback, four channels of amplification and comprehensive input, output, crossover and sound equalisation options.

There's no doubting the substantial capabilities of the DEH-X8700DAB head unit and that Pioneer offers it at a reasonable \$439 is but icing on a tasty cake.



ALPINE iLX-007E WWW.ALPINE.COM.AU

The ever-increasing presence of App-based software and the on-going desire to integrate the smartphone into the car space has resulted in the brilliant CarPlay protocol from Apple. This feature fully integrates the iPhone with the head unit in order to access various features in an ergonomically friendly and familiar fashion.

To this end we see increasing quantities of upmarket head units incorporating this technology and Alpine's iLX-007E is the bee's knees.

The head unit is dependent upon CarPlay's superb functionality – without it its functionality is limited to AM/FM radio. But hooked up to the iPhone the iLX-007E becomes an excellent music player, a fine navigation system, and a hands free telephone and text tool that's phenomenally easy to use. And of course it's controllable via the ever-improving Siri (microphone included) or the superbly-responsive 7-inch capacitive touchscreen. What's more, Alpine's CD/DVD changer and its TV tuner adds video and CD capabilities to expand the

entertainment options even further while the unit also accepts Alpine's excellent optional reversing camera.

Further control over the head unit's functions is provided by Alpine's TuneIt App which allows a whole stream of adjustments over equalisation, the crossover and the various filters. As Stephen Dawson succinctly put it, "essentially you set parameters in the app, and then select presets from the unit's own interface (or from the app). So, for example, you can choose from the unit one of several pre-programmed EQ settings. But to actually adjust the equaliser for the 'User' setting, you need to use the app. Likewise, you can switch the subwoofer on or off, set its level and flip its phase using the head unit's interface, but to adjust the crossover – both high-pass and low-pass with one-third octave intervals from 20 to 200 Hertz, with user definable slopes of up to 24dB/octave – you need the app.

The unit offers basic bass/mid/treble tone controls, but also includes a 9-band parametric equaliser, with bands able to be centred as low as 20 Hz and as high as 20,000 Hz. In addition

to the level of each the 'Q' (ie, range of effect) can be set. You can dial numbers into the app for these, or drag an on-screen icon around to make the level and frequency settings. And, of course, you can adjust the time alignment of the speakers in the app. Using the app, there's a system for setting up 'BassEngine SQ' for tuning the bass performance for, as Alpine says, "different types of music". The nifty thing about this is that if your system is using Alpine speakers and subwoofers you can select the models from lists so that the tuning system knows their characteristics. Five presets can be loaded into the unit for the variety of music."

But the iLX-007E is not just about features and CarPlay. The unit performs extremely well with all kinds of musical material and is capable of driving tricky speaker loads (reviewer Stephen Dawson tried home hi-fi speakers with moderate impedance fluctuations) while sounding powerful and in control.

We rate this head unit very highly indeed. In the Multimedia Head Unit category below \$1000 there's nothing out there to touch Alpine's iLX-007E.



Hot off the container and on to our crowded little market (and our hot little hands), the new Clarion VX506AU has created quite the splash.

The new head unit is GPS navigation ready via an optional SD506AU SD card which is loaded with all the now-expected advanced features – simply pop it in and away you go. On-board Bluetooth allows both streaming and hands-free telephony while 'Siri Eyes Free' controllability allows further hands-free function-

ality for iPhone users (text messages, email, etc). The bright 6-inch 800 by 480 pixels WVGA screen can also be used to play back video and images stored in your smartphone via a HDMI input while the unit has built-in Pandora playback capabilities via smartphone app allowing track display, thumbs up/down rating, etc.

The VX506AU is capable of playing back a wide variety of formats including DVD/MP4/H.264/CD/MP3/WMA/FLAC plus there's

an in-built AM/FM tuner, 2-volts multichannel outputs, 3-band parametric equaliser, a 4-channel 45 watts MOS-FET amplifier, rear camera composite input and more. The new Clarion VX506AU is a well-featured affordably-priced (\$799) multimedia head unit from an industry stalwart. We obviously were able to evaluate it for the purposes of this award and we look forward to bringing you a full review in an upcoming issue. Highly commended indeed.



Ah, what most companies wouldn't give to have the monetary resources Sony enjoys... Of course, this allows the Japanese giant to share R&D costs across many divisions and economies of scale also allow some keen pricing for the technology provided.

Ergo the XAV-68BT, Sony's stunning 6.2-inch touchscreen multimedia head unit with a superb selection of features – minus navigation – at a hot price point of \$549 big ones (or not

so big in this case). The in-built disc mechanism handles both CD and DVD while file compatibility is wide and includes MP3, WMA, Xvid, AAC, DivX and MP4 from any input provided they're formatted and stored within the standard FAT 12/16/32 file structure parameters.

There's an on-board AM/FM tuner with 18 presets for FM and 12 for AM. Ditto for Bluetooth which is the latest version able to both stream wireless audio and provide hands-

free telephony. There are two pairs of 2-volts pre-outs (switchable to subwoofer output), a composite video output and the unit employs a powerful internal 4-channel MOSFET amplifier capable of 23 watts continuously or 55 watts maximum output.

Overall the Sony is a fast performer, sounds great, offers the right mix of features and, as the viability of a large multinational permits, is very keenly priced. Excellent value.



BLAUPUNKT CAPE TOWN 940 WWW.AUDIOXTRA.COM.AU

As its review first states, Blaupunkt's Cape Town 940 stands out by departing from your average multimedia head unit in that instead of running a Windows operating system, its 1GHz Dual Core Cortex 9 processor runs Android 4.1.1. Jelly Bean software. That processor and operating system, in conjunction with 1GB of DDR3 SDRAM and 8GB of flash memory, results in a platform that provides smooth and lightning-fast responsiveness akin to a smartphone's.

The unit is superbly spec'ed and, for starters, features a well-isolated disc mechanism capable of playing back varieties of CD and DVD formats. The abilities continue by the 940's handling of just about any format from MP3, WMA, Xvid, AAC, DivX, MP4 to even FLAC while also being fitted with Blaupunkt's CODEM IV radio tuner, offering ten presets on both AM and FM bands.

Bluetooth of course is in-built and caters for both wireless music and hands-free telephony with multiple phones.

Then, as Marty Price described, "Whether it be music, movies, hospitality, navigation and even internet browsing through to news, emails, traffic, weather; you name it and if it's not available now it probably will be tomorrow. Naturally, you need to setup a connection first before diving head first into this infotainment kaleidoscope. To accomplish this Blaupunkt includes a small Wi-Fi dongle which plugs into one of the four USB. The dongle allows the deck to interface with hotspots emanating either from modems or phones." Of course be careful and set-it up with a modem connected to a plan with plenty of data. Conveniently, Blaupunkt has pre-loaded popular apps such as Shazam, Spotify, TuneIn, Google, FaceBook, Twitter, iGo, Amazon just to name a few. And obviously, the list of available apps is almost endless. And the unit also caters for the smartphone-replicating MirrorMode for further functionality based on smartphone platforms.

All is controlled, of course, via the classy and responsive fingerprint resistant TFT touch screen which boasts WVGA 800 x 480 pixel resolution which, due to the extremely bright LED backlighting, the image is ultra-sharp

and beautifully bright while the overall design of the deck is attractive and well designed ergonomically. Then you have comprehensive connectivity with front, rear and subwoofer 3-volts outputs, an in-built 4-channel MOS-FET amplifier, crossover settings, 5-band parametric equaliser, and very importantly, on-board GPS navigation which is far more sophisticated than the apps on your smartphone.

Overall, the Blaupunkt Cape Town 940 multimedia offering is one hell of a head unit and represents the best available in this price category.





Yet another new head unit from Japanese giant Clarion, this one at \$1399, has hit the local market just prior to our Awards evaluations. We expediently managed to get our hands on this one too and it impressed us enough to award it a Highly Commended prize.

Among other things, the NX606AU distinguishes itself from its Highly Commended stable mate (in the Multimedia Head Unit under

\$1000 category) by adopting GPS navigation as a standard feature. The 6-inch screen 800 by 480 WVGA touch screen provides a bright and sharp platform for the launch of video and images stored on your mobile device (via HDMI) while the unit also offers Pandora via app support.

Of course there's a disc mech for both CD and DVD (PAL/NTSC), a built-in four channel

MOS-FET amplifier, high/low pass filter adjustments, a variety of inputs/outputs, an AM/FM tuner, a rear vision camera composite video input and much more.

Clarion's NX606AU head unit made a strong impression on the judging panel and, once again, we look forward to putting this promising head unit through its paces in an upcoming issue of *InCar*.



The words reviewer Scott Campbell used in the opening passages of his review were "this head unit comes as a breath of fresh air" and he was referring to the AVH-X8750BT's ease of use.

Indeed, the unit features compatibility to both major smartphone operating systems for iOS and Android in CarPlay and Android Auto respectively. And what's more the AVH-X8750BT also caters for MirrorLink and

Pioneer's own AppMode, so all is covered. This allows full integration of smartphone and head unit via the respective systems' app-based functionality which can be controlled and navigated via the head unit's bright 7-inch touch screen.

Of course the AVH-X8750BT also offers a disc mech for both CD and DVD (PAL/NTSC) while providing comprehensive features such as Bluetooth (audio streaming and hands-free

telephony), Siri Eyes Free, compatibility with every format under the sun ("it will eat anything"), AM/FM radio tuner, multiple inputs/outputs (including a 4-volts out), a four channel amplifier and lots more.

There's no denying the power of this remarkable head unit. Pioneer continues to strengthen its electronics portfolio and in terms of features, quality and price, team Pioneer is offering superbly-balanced head units.



PIONEER AVIC-F70DAB WWW.PIONEER.COM.AU

The AVIC range has for many generations represented the flagship no-holds-barred multimedia head units from Pioneer. This latest-gen F70, the range-topper has so many features and functions that we had to actually condense our review graphics space to be able to fit them in back in issue 5-2015.

The AVIC enhances the functionality of the non-AVIC range topper by including Navteq navigation software including 4WD off-road mapping and SUNA live traffic updates. It also provides a number of other small improve-

ments over the AVH range including a slightly higher-spec 7-inch touch screen with an overall brighter backlit LED panel which offers 16:9 ratio/WVGA resolution of 1,152,000 pixels or 2400 x 480 and able to handle both NTSC and PAL.

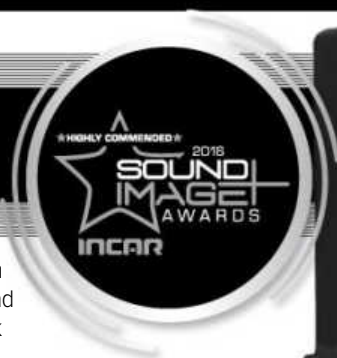
The AVIC-F70DAB has a built-in mech that handles plastic discs from either CD or DVD formats. The software compatibility is very wide and encompasses MP3, WMA, Xvid, AAC, DivX, MP4 and FLAC. Apple's CarPlay, Android's Auto, Pioneer's AppRadio and MirrorLink are all catered for allowing app-based functionality

And as many features as are available – and we've only touched on them here – the AVIC-F70DAB also caters to the sound performance of the most complex of systems. There's a powerful four channel amplifier, a multitude of inputs and outputs, a 13-band graphic equaliser, time alignment, crossover adjustability and more.

Pioneer's AVIC-F70DAB is a tour-de-force of head unit design, and it may be at the top tier of the price spectrum, but what it provides for your dollar is truly phenomenal. Terrific deck.

ALPINE X009E-U

WWW.ALPINE.COM.AU



You thought a nice and bright 7-inch screen gave you large graphics that are easy to read from the driver's or passenger's seat? Think again. Alpine has released the X009E-U multimedia head unit with a massive panoramic 9-inch screen that is beautifully bright and sharp. *That*, you can see from the rear of a bus!

Of course, the unit offers Alpine's usual quality all round, from its high quality four channel amplifier, comprehensive digital features (adjustable via Alpine's brilliant Tunelt app), inputs and outputs and the latest Parrot Bluetooth chip.

The unit also offers three years' worth of free map updates for the included GPS



navigation. MirrorLink is supported offering smartphone integration too. Alpine provides a number of ready-to-go solutions for a growing number of vehicles for the dash integration of

the X009E-U monster head unit. Given all of the above functions and features it is undeniably clear that this massive head unit is one hell of a multimedia solution. Innovative stuff!

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ALPINE PDX-F6GC WWW.ALPINE.COM.AU

Gold has always been a symbol of prestige and quality. So what better way to celebrate what has become an extremely highly-regarded amplifier than by releasing a special edition in Gold livery?

This is exactly what Alpine has done with its superb PDX-F6 amplifier – now in its ‘GC’ Gold Collection version – and it has blossomed into a beautifully-built example of car audio amplification design. Alpine has a tradition of releasing state-of-the-art special versions of

its amplifiers starting with the legendary F#1 Status range which is highly sought-after and still revered among audio enthusiasts the world over.

The PDX-F6GC is a high current digital Class-D amplifier with each of its four channels being rated to produce over 150 watts continuous when presented with a 2- to 4-ohms load. This rating is not overblown marketing hype as the amplifier complies with CES2006 standards and Alpine provides a birth certificate with verification with each amplifier.

And for the PDX-F6GC, Alpine has managed to wring out what may just about be the very

best specifications of any amplifier extant. We’re talking a total harmonic distortion of 0.003% measured at 10 watts and an outstanding full power distortion of 0.05% coupled to a signal-to-noise ratio of 118dB at full power and a damping factor of approximately 1000. Outstanding.

And the sound quality followed the extraordinary specifications with a sonic presentation which was powerful, in control and intimately detailed.

We’ll wager that, given a few years, the PDX-F6GC will be considered an iconic Alpine amplifier. A true winner.



DB DRIVE A8 2000.5 WWW.DBDRIVE.COM.AU

Since relaunching in this country a few years ago, the American company db Drive has been making terrific progress with its range of high quality kit spanning the car audio spectrum.

As part of the comprehensive flagship A8 series, the A8 2000.5 amplifier thoroughly impressed the judging panel.

On offer is a solid 125 watts of pure Class-D power into each of its four channels while the fifth channel – which is a dedicated subwoofer-powering channel – provides the added grunt

of 485 continuous watts to control almost any low-frequency driver (all at 4-ohms rating).

Comprehensively featured, well-built, with ample power and terrific sound quality, the db Drive A8 2000.5 amplifier is a highly-deserving recipient of our prestigious Highly Commended Award.



ROCKFORD FOSGATE T400X4AD WWW.DIRECTED.COM.AU

Diminutive it may be but the T400X4ad amplifier from iconic American manufacturer Rockford Fosgate is a true powerhouse. The amplifier is beautifully-built and comes with

a 'birth certificate' both signs of, potentially, great things to come. And indeed they came... The amp is a superb performer in terms of sound quality and offers the usual high level of features and engineering Rockford Fosgate is renowned for. On offer is a 4-channel amplifier using Rockford's proprietary Class-AD tech-

nology which in this application produces a constant 100 watts into each channel. It offers low and high level inputs, high-pass filters and more. The judging panel really rated this unit and it serves as proof that Rockford Fosgate's engineering team are, as always, producing outstanding product. Awesome.



AUDISON PRIMA AP4.9 bit WWW.AUDISON.COM

Italian high-end car audio specialist Audison has had a tradition of developing products at the cutting edge of technology. The company's 'bit' range of products feature advanced digital processing and the Prima AP4.9 bit is no exception.

The AP4.9 shares the same processor as last year's InCar Award-winning AP8.9 bit,

except in the case of the AP4.9, the power and channel configuration is now four channels at 70 watts each. And the digital processor allows channel input/output configuration, matching to Audison's outstanding DRC controller, parametric equalisation, full digital crossover type (Full/High-Pass/Low-Pass/Band-Pass) and configuration selection, phase adjustment, time alignment and much more.

Of course all this is coupled with exemplary build quality and specifications, high current

drive and a styling which is understated and reasonably-sized for easy placement within the vehicle.

Although not formally reviewed within 2015, the judging panel obtained an audition sample – to likely appear in a full formal review during 2016 – and was suitably impressed with the sonic prowess of the AP 4.9 bit while also taking into consideration the extensive features list and overall product presentation. A worthy category winner.



MOSCONI GLADEN ZERO 3 WWW.MOBILEAUDIOSOLUTIONS.COM.AU

Another Italian makes an impression and rounds out the amplifier over \$1000 category. This time it's Mosconi's outstanding Gladen Zero 3 from that company's high-end range. This is a well-engineered straight-up Class-

A/B powerhouse capable of 270 watts output from each of its two channels. Load it down to a 2-ohms load and you'll get an astonishing 520 watts per channel. But the Gladen Zero 3 is a refined and powerful sonic performer

that can wring the best from your high-end main speakers while also being able to control big subwoofers with an iron fist, if asked to perform that duty. The respected brand is back with a knock-out punch; a terrific performer.

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Set on the lush and unspoilt East Coast of Bali, **Hotel Komune Resort and Beach Club** is blessed with a hypnotising view of the world famous Keramas surf break. The resort is conveniently only 50 minutes away from Ngurah Rai International Airport. With its pristine volcanic beach, this 4 star beachfront Bali resort offers a wonderful experience of spending leisure time in a natural luxury hotel. Sumptuously appointed accommodation with artistic furniture, this unique Bali resort articulates the identity of the Island of the Gods.

In 2015 Hotel Komune launched its new Health Hub facility at the Bali resort after recognising demand from guests for further health and wellness experiences. The Health Hub features a yoga centre, 25m training pool, functional training centre, day spa, health café and fitness centre.

For more information, visit www.komuneresorts.com/keramasbali



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DB DRIVE EUPHORIA ES9 6C WWW.DBDRIVE.COM.AU

The flagship speaker range for car audio specialist db Drive is the appropriately-named Euphoria range. It consists of a number of products culminating in the Euphoria ES9 6C component speaker system that the judging panel thought were quite extraordinary.

The 165mm main drivers are housed in heavy die-cast baskets which are coated with anti-resonant material while the 25mm tweeter is surrounded by nicely-milled aluminium rings. These may sound like cosmetics but it

all reflects what's to come. The 165mm's hybrid glass fibre cone material looks like carbon fibre with a very tight weave and features a rubber surround. They are specified as being 93dB sensitive and rated to maximum dynamic power of 300 watts (100 watts RMS). The tweeter features a magnesium alloy dome with neodymium magnet system attached to a full 25mm magnesium voice coil. The frequency response is quoted as spanning between 30Hz and 22kHz. The entire product presentation is one of high quality build and solid engineering.

Over a prolonged auditioning period the ES9 6C speaker system was found to be remark-

ably neutral and extremely revealing of amplification and source quality. The speakers are certainly high-end in terms of requiring high quality components to drive them. Given that level of support, they are extremely detailed, dynamic and resolute speakers that provide extremely satisfying sound. And their speed and resolution will demand a nimble sub – slow over-warm subwoofers need not apply.

The db Drive Euphoria ES9 6C speakers are very well-engineered, represent good value at \$650 and had reviewer Scott Campbell waxing, um... euphoric on their outstanding sound quality. And so was the judging panel.



New for its 2015 range are the EN-CM652 2-way split system from New Zealand audio specialist Fusion. And what an impression they made on the judging panel! Here were speakers from a global company that feature well-

made drivers – a 165mm polypropylene driver and PEI, or Polyetherimide, 25mm ferro-fluid cooled tweeter – metal grilles and generous mounting options, all at a staggeringly low price of \$79. And they performed very well

indeed with reviewer Stephen Dawson finding the tweeter to be tonally smooth, natural and realistic with the overall design to be expertly well-balanced. How Fusion has been able to offer so much for so little is staggering. 'Nuff said.



The DXi6501 may be part of a series that is one step down from the top MM range but they certainly don't display any compromises both in terms of engineering and sound quality.

The 2-way system comprises of a 165mm Polypropylene Composite Cone (PCC) with butyl rubber surround that is married to a liquid-cooled silk/polymer composite 25mm dome tweeter.

It's a 4-ohms system with a 92dB sensitivity that can handle 100 watts of continuous power. Reviewer Scott Campbell exclaims, "the Polk

DXi6501 is one of the few speaker systems this reviewer has heard that get tonal qualities correct. It makes for fatigue-free listening." And indeed the speakers impressed in many

other aspects of sound reproduction too. He then concludes, "I'd certainly consider the Polk DXi6501 splits for any installation..." And that is high commendation indeed.



HERTZ MILLE MLK 1650.3 LEGEND

WWW.HERTZAUDIOVIDEO.COM

The Hertz Mille MLK 1650.3 Legend was yet another product that came into award consideration without much challenge whatsoever. Boy, oh boy, did these speakers impress... Italian company Hertz has built an enviable reputation around the sound competition arena for providing outstanding products in every category. For these new splits, the company spared no expense, however, the mandate for this entire Mille range was to produce class-leading products at prices that don't decimate the bank balance.

In the highly-engineered third generation (that's the '.3') the system is made up of the meticulously-designed ML 280.3 tweeter with its 35mm Tetolon fibre diaphragm in a near full semi-circular profile to help reduce distortion. This works in conjunction with the black CNC-machined solid alloy frame and a 28mm 4-ohms copper-coated aluminium voice coil wrapped around a thermally efficient polyamide former. The main driver is a 165mm black-coated rubber surround cone constructed from

pressed paper pulp which has been interwoven with cotton fibre. The diaphragm is specially contoured in the shape of an exponential V and this geometrically optimised profile acts much the same way as a phase plug, keeping frequencies linear and offering wide dispersion. The shape also offers exceptional resistance against physical deformation during extreme loads, again lowering distortions.

The large magnet motor incorporates a 36mm voice coil on a polyamide former wrapped with a double layer copper-coated aluminium wire boasting a power ability of 125 watts continuous. The system is quoted as being 92dB efficient.

Reviewer Marty Price was almost "flabbergasted" by the MLK 1650.3's performance and thought them to be extraordinarily accurate, detailed and dynamically impressive speakers.

Taking into account the benefits of brand cachet, the extraordinary high levels of engineering, the high materials quality and the superb sound, we judged the Hertz Mille MLK 1650.3 Legend to be peerless in this category. Worthy winners indeed.

DBDrive.net.au
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Subwoofers SQ
DB Drive EW9 12D4



Amplifiers under \$1000
DB Drive A8-2000.5





FOCAL P20 F WWW.FOCALAUSTRALIA.COM.AU

French audio specialist Focal continues to push the envelope of materials technology for the use in speaker drivers. After using 'Polyglass' sandwiches as the trademark diaphragm material for many generations the company began research on an alternative which led it to Flax as a worthy alternative. Flax is a natural fibre, it's extremely strong, very light and grows in abundance in France. Sounds like the perfect cone solution, right? As a result of the research, Focal launched its Flax series of

speakers and subwoofers as used in ranges for both its car and home audio products.

And it was back in issue 3-2015 where we took a look at the then new P20 F, an 8-inch subwoofer using the new Flax diaphragm. The driver has a moderate 82.5dB efficiency, 4-ohms impedance and 39Hz to 800Hz frequency range as quote by Focal. Power handling has been specified at 250 watts continuous with a maximum of double that at 500 watts. The large motor features a double-stacked 120mm x 32mm ferrite magnet and the entire 117mm deep affair is held rigidly in place via an open, aerodynamically transparent stamped steel frame which has been powder

coated in the traditional Focal grey. Back plate intake ports assure good air flow in order to keep the sub nice and cool under high power situations. Reviewer Marty Price found that the P20 F performed, "from gentler genres like classical and jazz, with their lingering lower bass notes through to the faster genres of metal and dance with its lightning fast demands, the P20F handles them all without much ado."

Once again, Focal has produced a high performance subwoofer using a new natural material and the company's usual class-leading levels of design and engineering. That it sounds superb is confirmation that advanced design pays off in the accurate reproduction of music.



As part of the flagship range the EW9 12D4 promises performance on par with the company's award-winning Euphoria speakers – see the Speakers of the Year under \$1000 category winner.

The EW9 12D4 is db Drive's attack on the high quality subwoofer space. It's a 12-inch

driver with a double-stacked strontium magnet system and twin 4-ohms voice coils. The woofer has comprehensive cooling design elements in order to keep the 75mm voice coil from overheating under high SPLs. But this is strictly an SQ sub, with reviewer Marty Price pronouncing it, "... the EW9 12D4 is easily one

of the best I've heard within the sub-kilo-buck price region."

The judging panel agreed and found the EW9 12D4 to not only sound stunning but also capable of producing surprising kick and punch. Sounds like db Drive has done it again...



Long-time American company MTX offers an extensive range of audio products with a reputation for high levels of engineering, reliability and sound quality.

The MTX 9512-22 monster-of-a-subwoofer is strong proof of such a statement. It's a dual 2-ohms 12-inch subwoofer with a massive triple-stacked 7.2kg Y30 high-density ceramic

magnet system capable of traveling 31.75mm! Now that's high excursion right there. This is coupled to a strong progressively-wound poly-cotton spider, a glass fibre composite cone and a thick nitrile rubber surround with a specially designed twin-peak profile.

The 9512-22 is 82.5dB efficient and can cope with 1200 watts of continuous power

doubling into 2400 watts maximum. All of this translates to a driver that is magnificent in its technology and engineering.

And although it sounded extraordinary in the SQ category, the 9512-22 sub is quite capable of massive SPLs so could easily compete in that space too. This is an accurate and powerful sounding subwoofer of the highest class.



ORION HCCA122 WWW.ORIONCARAUDIO.COM.AU

When you talk Orion and then continue on to subwoofers the subject will undoubtedly turn to HCCA. That's Orion's model nomenclature for the biggest and baddest subs in the biz. And here, enter the category winner, the revised HCCA122. Of course it's a gargantuan 12-inch subwoofer with the solidity of a battleship. And really, it qualifies as an SQL sub as it's often referred to – it mixes massive SPL capabilities with great sound quality performance. This is a 30kg (!) subwoofer with, naturally, a phenomenal magnet system

surrounding a 4-inch aluminium former tightly wrapped with twin 2-ohms Polyester Amide resin-coated copper-clad aluminium coils. The massive suspension system is made up of twin flat-laced Conex spiders offering a sensitivity of 84.2dB and an equally impressive thick nitrile butadiene rubber/foam surround shaped into a carefully designed tri-radius symmetrical edge profile. This not only offers maximum radial reinforcement during soft playback through to the most demanding periods of play, it also allows linear cone movement throughout its 24Hz to 100Hz range. Said diaphragm is

constructed from a pulp material which is hard pressed into a specific shape. The HCCA122 is quoted as being capable of handling a staggering 2500 watts continuous (5000 watts max) with a response from 24Hz to 100Hz. But the HCCA122 is not just about brute force. Given an appropriately powerful amplifier the judging panel found it to sound surprisingly accurate in terms of tonality and punch, not to mention staggeringly dynamic. The Orion HCCA122 is a superbly engineered product which would look great in any show car and can certainly mix it with the very best subwoofers on the planet.



The Power range of subwoofers from Rockford Fosgate is aimed at the serious listener and seeker of high audio output combined with sound quality.

The T1D212 is a 12-incher featuring dual 2-ohms high-temperature anodised aluminium voice coil formers clad in copper aluminium

wire, symmetrical dual progressive roll tear resistant poly-cotton spiders and a Kevlar fibre reinforced paper cone with anodised aluminium heat sinking dust cap. The die-cast aluminium basket is massive and has been designed to allow good air flow around the voice coil structure. It's rated at 800 watts

continuous, 1600 watts maximum with a frequency response of 20Hz – 200Hz.

The Rockford Fosgate T1D212 subwoofer is tremendously well-engineered, sounds powerful and accurate and at the value-for-money price of \$699 is an absolute no-brainer as a highly-commended awardee.



VIBE AUDIO CVENC8-V4 WWW.VIBEAUDIOAUSTRALIA.COM.AU

We've rejigged this category to include all manner of subwoofers that are mounted in an enclosure, whether passive or active. And here after some deliberation the judging panel chose Vibe Audio's CVENC8-V4 as the category winner. This was a superbly-built active subwoofer in a metal enclosure which houses a high-power 8-inch woofer driver on its top panel under a tough steel grille. But in order to get big output from an enclosure that can actually fit under a car seat, Vibe Audio cunningly

mounted two 170mm by 30mm rectangular passive radiators, one on each side of the enclosure. The CVENC8-V4 is powered by an amplifier rated at 120 watts RMS and 240 watts 'Peak'. You can wire the unit up with a line level signal from the head unit or with speaker level signals so configuration options are convenient. Further adjustability is provided via a built-in low-pass filter control by which you set the upper frequencies you want the sub to handle (between 50Hz and 150Hz). A built-in filter eliminates frequencies below 20Hz. There's a gain control and a bass boost control with up to 18dB boost at 45Hz. A phase reversal

switch allows easy integration with your main speakers while a cabled remote control can be placed anywhere for volume level adjustments. Reviewer Stephen Dawson was duly impressed with the CVENC8-V4 and stated, "... with the drums, the power of the main part of the note was again delivered with control and an almost perceptible shockwave, while the post-strike resonances pulsated effectively."

In this growing category of in-car subwoofers the Vibe Audio CVENC8-V4 is a shining example of clever design and high performance mixed with convenience in size and placement.



Colloquially known as DD, Digital Designs has been making ultra-tough high SPL subwoofers since the early 1980s. Here with the LE-M08, the company is offering a high quality passive ported box loaded with a high-power pressed paper 8-inch driver. An inch-wide double-stitched foam surround works in conjunction

with the flat rolled polycotton spider below to provide an efficiency of 92dB. The LE-M08 is rated at 250 watts continuous, 500 watts maximum with a decent frequency response between 30Hz and 300Hz and an impedance of 4-ohms. Digital Designs has spent considerable effort in designing an enclosure subwoofer

that isn't about boom and doof. In fact, the LE-M08 reached surprisingly low in a controlled manner and exhibited very good detail and transient attack. This is a quite special passive enclosed subwoofer – and great value at \$329 – from one of the industry's foremost bass experts.



The PS8 is yet another 'under seat' subwoofer, this time from US stalwart Rockford Fosgate. It's a powered 8-inch driver with a built-in 150 watts Class-D amplifier. Measuring just 354mm x 239mm wide, it's only 85mm deep and it's constructed from a heavy, inert black plastic, which is extremely dense and non-resonant.

This will provide a solid platform for the PS8's driver to perform at its optimum via its frequency range of 25Hz to 150Hz.

The PS8 is well featured too with high-level and low-level inputs, remote/DC Offset/Signal Sense turn-on, variable 12dB/Octave Butterworth low-pass, Bass Boost and 0- or

180-degrees phase switching. The review's conclusion summarises with, "if you like a somewhat stealthy install, quality over quantity and a tuneful, musical bass foundation to your in-car listening experience, the PS-8 would be a great choice." We'd add that at the price of \$499 it's a bargain, to boot.



★★★WINNER★★★

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